



NATURE'S TEACHINGS

by
E. A. STURGE



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NATURE'S TEACHINGS

"Tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in everything."

BY

E. A. STURGE.

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TO

MANY JAPANESE FRIENDS
ON BOTH SIDES OF THE PACIFIC
THIS LITTLE VOLUME
IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.

PREFACE

Wheat and chaff together lie
Upon this threshing floor ;
Chaff is worthless, and I sigh
To think that there is more
Of it than grain,
Which will remain
When winnowing is o'er.

Corn and husk are mingled here,
The gleanings from the field
Of nature ; and I greatly fear
That small will be the yield ;
But blow away
The chaff, I pray,
Some grain may be revealed.

'Tis now with trembling hand I pour
My treasure to the wind,
In hopes that from the gathered store
Some hungry one may find
A grain or two
Of something new,
To feed the heart and mind.

E. A. STURGE.

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“TONGUES IN TREES”

Among the orange groves of Riverside
A stranger wandered with a rustic guide.
The mountain peaks still wore their robes of snow,
While orange trees were white with bloom below.
The air was filled with fragrance and the hum
Of insects. Every tree possessed a tongue.

Some seedlings first were noticed; all of these
Had recently been grafted from some trees
Of better stock. “These,” said the guide, “will bear
More luscious fruit; but that one growing there
Has missed; its stem is thorny as you see;
Its fruit will be of poorer quality.”

Then o’er the stranger’s mind the feeling came,
That men and trees are very much the same.
The nature must be changed, by grafting in
A life more perfect, else the fruits of sin
Instead of righteousness will surely grow;
And, whether one has missed, the fruit will show.

A few steps farther, and they stood beside
A newly planted orchard, then the guide
Explained that each was fastened to a stake
While young, for it was needful thus to make
Them upright: “But restraint continued long
Will make them weak,” he said, “instead of strong.”

NATURE'S TEACHINGS

The thought came stealing o'er the stranger's mind,
That trees are also like the human kind
In this respect. We also must be trained
While young, and every child should be restrained;
But wisely, for if carried to great length,
The character will something lose in strength.

"How long," was asked, "before these trees will bear,
And make a fit return for all the care
Bestowed upon them by their owner now?"
The guide replied, "For full five years the plough
Must stir the soil, and give them time to grow,
Before a single orange they bestow ;

"But after that, they should with proper care
Yield more and more each year ; but over there
Is a neglected orchard, where the trees
Untrimmed, unwatered—once as fine as these—
Have perished, or are fruitless and half dead ;
No oranges are there, but weeds instead."

The trees were preaching, and they seemed to say
In trumpet tones abiding to this day,
That many who in youth give promise fair,
Neglected and unwatered, nothing bear.
With patience let instructors work and wait,
The golden fruit will come, though often late.

The guide then told the stranger of the fight
Against the scale and other things that blight
The growing trees. All evil is kept out
By watchfulness. The stranger thought about
The Master's words. These orchardists are right,
And wiser than some children of the light.

“BOOKS IN THE RUNNING BROOKS”

Liquid are the notes and low
Of thy waters as they flow,
Gaily tripping o'er the stones,
Singing in soft undertones,
Singing day and night the same
Pleasing musical refrain.

Laughing, dancing merrily
On thy journey to the sea.
Every little silver rill
Adds its own peculiar trill
To the obligato thou
Singest with the bird and bough.

Perfectly thy song combines
With the wind-harps of the pines,
Touched by ghostly hands unseen,
Passing o'er the wires of green.
Wondrous is the harmony
Found in Nature's melody!

Rough and tortuous thy path,
But at hardships thou dost laugh;
Tripping joyfully along,
Cheering others with thy song.
Brooklet, we would learn from thee
What our human lives should be.

“SERMONS IN STONES”

A tiny irritating grain of sand
Once found its way into an oyster shell;
'Twas covered with a substance smooth and bland,
And undisturbed was suffered there to dwell.
That little vexing thing so sharp and mean
Produced a pearl that might adorn a queen.

Exasperating things which come to all
Instead of evils will—if sweetly borne—
Prove blessings in disguise; and we, like Paul,
May learn to glory even in a thorn;
For such, like grains of sand, may be impearled,
And changed to jewels for another world.

A lapidary found a dull, rough stone
Discolored from its contact with the mire;
He washed it in the brook, and took it home,
And ground it on his wheel until the fire
From out it flashed. It sparkled like a sun,
And proved a jewel when his work was done.

A greater Lapidary having found
And washed us in the fountain of His grace;
Upon the wheel of love we're being ground,
And fitted for a more exalted place.
The polishing will by and by be o'er,
And we will shine His jewels evermore.

“GOOD IN EVERYTHING”

From deadly-nightshade blooming at our feet,
A bee was gathering the nectar sweet;
And as he worked, he said with drowsy hum:
“Behold, from harmful weeds may honey come!”
Thus teaching us that some good may be had
From evil things; they are not wholly bad.

LAKE TAHOE

“O loveliest of lakes, Tahoe!

Thy crystal waters, from the steep
Where Tallac spreads his robe of snow,
Are matchless, and thy heart too deep
For any one but God to know.

A mile above the restless sea,
And bluer than the skies o’er head,
Reveal thy secret now to me,
The story of thy birth,” I said,
“That I may something like thee be.”

“You know, I was not always here,”

The lake replied, “once, where I dwell,
Was scene beyond description drear;
Instead of paradise, ’twas hell.
A sea of fire rolled in my bed;
The air was filled with sulphur smoke;
And where the Truckee flows, instead
A molten lava river broke,
And carried havoc as it spread.
Of death and death alone it spoke.”

NATURE'S TEACHINGS

"What made the change?" I asked once more.
The answer came: "God quenched the fires,
And decked my steep and rocky shore
With ever verdant pine-tree spires.
The everlasting snows that crown
These proud Sierra's lofty heights,
Are ever sending brooklets down,
To fill me with untold delights.
With deer from forest, men from town
I gladly share my water rights."

"O God," I cried, "remove the bad
From me; and quench within my breast
The fiery passions! Make me glad,
And fill me with thy peace and rest!
O fill me, till I overflow
Like this fair river from the lake;
That I may also, as I go
Along my journey, help to slake
The thirst of others here below!
O grant this for the Saviour's sake!"



SINFUL PLEASURES

In the garden of sin there are flowers,
Which appear to the eye very fair;
There are roses with velvety petals,
Which conceal cruel thorns, that will tear;
There are poppies, that deaden the senses;
There are nightshades, that poison the air;
But the violet modestly hiding,
And the lily are never found there.

NATURE'S TEACHINGS

GOD'S WORDS

Each star that twinkles in the sky,
Each grain of sand beside the sea,
Each fleecy cloud that passes by,
And every leaf upon the tree
Contains a word of God for me.

They speak of wisdom, might and love;
They show the patience and the care
Of the Creator, who, above,
And in His works, is everywhere.
His presence wraps us like the air.

TRAINING THE VISION

God gives us eyes, but our part lies
In training them to see
The hidden loveliness of things
In distant suns, in insect's wings,
In sky, and earth and sea.

God gives us eyes, but sunset skies
Are not the same to all;
To some they give a keen delight,
While others in the wondrous sight
No beauty see at all.

With inward eyes one sees what lies
From common sight concealed;
And these, with exercise, will grow
In their ability to know
The things to them revealed.

A BLESSING OR A CURSE

If the breeze but gently kiss
The petals of the rose,
It takes a little sweetness from
The blossom, as it goes;
But if it linger for a time
Where waters stagnant lie,
It carries death within its breath
Wherever it may fly.

If like the breeze we will come close
To Sharon's lovely Rose,
We will be sweet to all we meet,
Be they our friends or foes;
But if instead of touching Him,
We linger by the side
Of the impure, we may be sure
To scatter evil wide.

THE POWER OF BEAUTY

The loveliness of woods and sea,
The strength and beauty of the hills,
Will often bring tranquility
To troubled hearts; for beauty stills
One's restlessness to some extent,
Producing in its stead content.

The restless soul will surely find
In contemplation of our Lord—
In whom were perfectly combined
The strength and beauty that accord
With perfect character—a balm,
That changes all unrest to calm.

CLING AND CLIMB

A mighty oak by ivy clasped
Had braved the awful tempest's blast,
And been by lightning torn;
Yet it endured, for round the wound
The ever verdant ivy bound
Her graceful, clinging form.

A still small voice then said to me:
"The Christ is like that riven tree,
And you are like the vine;
Just cling to Him, and He will give
You strength a higher life to live.
Your life with His combine."

"To lift you is the Master's part.
To cling is yours. It cheers His heart
To feel your fond embrace.
Bind up His broken heart with love;
And clinging, climb to worlds above,
Where you shall see His face."

TEMPTATION

In Everyman's garden is growing a tree,
Like that found in Eden of old;
Whatever its fruit, it is pleasant to see—
Perhaps it is apples of gold—
'Tis something attractive to Everyman's eyes,
Which he would desire to attain,
Because it seems likely to make a man wise,
And yet he is told to refrain.

THE ORIGIN OF MAIZE

There was once a dusky maiden,
Starry eyed and tall and slender,
Graceful as the reeds that quiver
In the breeze beside the river,
Where she ripened into beauty.

Once the river god pursued her—
By her many charms attracted—
But she hid among the rushes,
Where by help of the Great Spirit,
She was into corn transfigured.

Snowy teeth became the kernels
Of the maize in rows as even
As her own; her hair like midnight
Into silk was changed; her garments
Into husks, which wrapped her closely.

Thus transformed, her people found her
Closely veiled among the rushes;
And for them she gave up gladly
Her own life, that she might nourish
Theirs upon their earthly journey.

Does this legend not remind us
Of the one who died to furnish
To the world the Bread of Heaven—
Manna for the soul's subsistence—
Freely to all those who hunger?

LIFE'S AUTUMN

Some foolish people blush to say
That they are growing old;
As silly for the harvest fields,
That roll in waves of gold,
To blush at their perfection, drawn
From sunshine, rain and mold.

The blush upon the apple's cheek—
Or that on peach or pear—
Is surely not because of shame,
That it is hanging there
In mellowest maturity,
To scent the garden air.

Do maple leaves at autumn time
Blush crimson on the tree
Because of age? No: not at all,
But full maturity
Has added to their loveliness.
So let it with us be!

As Autumn comes to each of us,
And thins and frosts the hair,
She ought to find in every life
Increasing sweetness there.
Lord, make our closing years the best!
This is our earnest prayer.

LIFE'S SEASONS

Each life—if complete—has its seasons,
Its spring-time with opening flowers,
Its bird songs, its hopes and depressions,
Like April with sunshine and showers.

Each life—if complete—has its summer,
The season when harvests of grain
And ripening fruits must be gathered;
A season of joy and of pain.

Each life—if complete—has its autumn,
With many a sweet, restful day;
When hopes—like the leaves that are withered—
Are loosened, and flutter away.

Each life—if complete—has its winter,
Its chill and its burden of snow;
Each life needs these seasons, in order
That it to perfection may grow.



HUMILITY

The more abundant is the yield
Of useful grain, the lower bow
The heads that bear it in the field;
And always the most fruitful bough
Upon the tree will lowest bend;
Thus teaching those with eyes to see,
That there should without fail attend
On fruitfulness humility.

NATURE'S TEACHINGS

THE EMPTY NEST

Among the leafless branches,
Exposed to winter's snow,
A little, clinging bird's nest
Was swaying to and fro;
A thing more desolate it seemed
Impossible to know.

Where are the birds that had their home
Here in the happy spring?
They are not dead. When autumn came,
God taught them how to wing
Their way to brighter southern skies,
Where now they sweetly sing.

When from the nests we call our homes
Our loved ones fly away,
They are not dead, but praising God
In realms of endless day.
Lord, teach us how to follow them
Along the heavenly way.



NOT ALWAYS THE SAME

The waterfall looks cold and gray
When seen upon a cloudy day
Through gauzy veil of drifting spray;
But in the sunshine warm and bright,
When decked with ferns and crowned with light
In rainbow colors, what a sight!

RIVERS AND BROOKS

Great souls like mighty rivers seem to be
With purpose deep proceeding noiselessly
Until they reach the sea, eternity ;
But smaller souls—like brooklets held at bay
By rocky barriers—make constant fray,
And seem to meet with friction all the way.

“CONSIDER THE LILIES ”

“Consider how the lilies grow !”

The Master said one time.

The tongues of gold in lily bells

At once began to chime,

And tell about the Father's care

For all his creatures everywhere,

In every land and clime.

Now this is what the lilies say

About the way they grow :

“We choose the best from out the clay,

Reject the rest, and so

By help of sunshine, air and showers

We grow to be the purest flowers

With robes as white as snow.”

If we would like the Master be

While dwelling here below,

And live a life of purity

The way the lilies show,

We, too, must choose the best each day,

And cast all evil things away,

For thus the lilies grow.

THE OCEAN'S STORY

Have you the Ocean's story heard?
'Tis written in the sand
Which formed the rocks, and in God's Word—
For both are from His hand—
But let me now relate to you
The story of the sea,
As once while standing on the shore,
The Ocean told it me.
It speaks to those with ears to hear
In language of its own;
Sometimes in whispers soft and clear,
Sometimes in thunder tone;
But this time moving restlessly,
And tossing in its bed,
With mingled murmurs and deep sighs
Complainingly it said:

"My story goes far back beyond
The time when man was born,
When earth was but a heated mass,
And empty, without form;
I was not then confined as now
To stay within my bed,
But free to wander through the air
Wherever fancy led;
And everywhere I wrapped the world
In mantle of dark cloud;
For earth was lifeless, so I made
For her a fitting shroud;
But even then God's Spirit—which
Is present everywhere—
Upon my troubled waters moved,
And said, "Let light be there!"

NATURE'S TEACHINGS

“Then slowly, when the heated crust
Upon this mundane ball
Had cooled enough to let me stay,
I settled down o’er all,
Until I covered everything,
And also filled the air ;
On every hand above, below
Was water everywhere.
At last through the decreasing clouds
There came a little light,
Then for the first the difference
Was seen ’twixt day and night ;
This day was called by God the first,
Though ages long had fled ;
A thousand years are with the Lord
As but one day, ’tis said.”

“As earth was like a furnace hot,
I filled the murky air ;
Below, above, on every side
Was ocean everywhere ;
But earth was ever drawing me
Still closer to her heart,
Until I like a garment thick
Enveloped every part ;
Until my waters down below,
And those that floated high
Were separated by the space
Which now you call the sky.
This work the great Creator—
Who alone has made us all—
The second day of earthly change,
In wisdom chose to call.”

"From occupying all the air,
 And wrapping all the earth,
 Instead of growing larger
 As I should have done from birth,
 My confines have been narrowed much,
 Till now my place I keep,
 Within the earth's depressions here,
 These caverns of the deep;
 For as the crust in cooling off,
 Kept wrinkling more and more,
 The mountains ever higher rose,
 And so pushed back my shore;
 But once—though lifting now her head—
 The earth on which you stand
 Was all beneath me covered up;
 This please to understand."

"The earth—like a great greenhouse—then
 Was hot and steamy, too;
 The clouds and acid air too dark
 To let the sunlight through;
 But like the whitened surface of
 Conservatory glass,
 Kept in the heat, admitted light,
 But let no sunshine pass.
 And now the earth at God's command
 With plants began to teem,
 And clothed herself on every side
 With robe of living green;
 And then through countless ages long
 This plant life stored away
 The mines of coal, and cleared the air;
 And this was the third day."

"The air was slowly purified,
 Until there came to view
 The sun and moon and hosts of stars,
 Which seemed to be quite new;
 Until that time I hid them,
 With my mantle spread between;
 But then upon the surface here
 They for the first were seen.
 And these, God said, should be to earth
 The measure of her times,
 The measure of her days and years,
 For seasons and for signs.
 The fourth day was completed
 With its even and its morn,
 And then Jehovah spoke to me,
 And in me life was born."

"For God said, 'Let the waters now
 Bring forth abundantly
 Of living things, and winged fowl,
 To fly above the sea!'
 And so the Lord created things,
 Some clothed with shining scales,
 And little creeping creatures strange,
 And the great plunging whales.
 The myriads of fish and birds,
 That found with me a home,
 God having blessed, commanded them
 O'er every part to roam;
 Then birds with plumage various
 Above me winged their way;
 So morning followed evening on
 The fifth creation day."

NATURE'S TEACHINGS

"Then when the earth was all prepared,
Responsive to the call
Of the Creator, creatures came,
Strange beings great and small;
Then last of all came human kind,
To rule the earth and sea;
To lord it o'er all living things,
And lord it over me;
For unto man alone of all
He made, He gave a soul;
So every living beast and bird
Is under his control.
Jehovah's labors ended on
The sixth creation day."
And this is what the Ocean in
Its story had to say.



HIDDEN FRAGRANCE

The grass is sweetest after it is mown.
Some plants require to feel the crushing hand,
In order that their perfume may be known;
While others are more fragrant left alone.
It is not likely that they understand
The reason why we crush them; but we know
The Master understands the plants that grow
In His great garden, and He loves them more
Than others do; but bruises some to show
The world the reason why He loves them so;
Revealing virtues quite unknown before.

THE HEIGHT AND DEPTH OF GOD'S LOVE

We wondered why the Great Apostle spake
Of both the height and depth of love divine ;
For height and depth are equal, save the line
In one case measures downward from above,
While in the other case we try to take
From earth's low plane the measure of that love.

We wondered, till we scaled a little cone
Called Sugar-loaf, on Catalina's shore,
A little, rugged peak that seems no more
Than a mere wart on Nature's smiling face,
To those who try to gage its height alone
With eye uplifted, standing at its base.

But those who climb the ladder up its side,
And from above look down, and giddy grow,
Experience the difference, and know
That distance seems much greater from above,
Than does the same in looking from below ;
And so it must be with our Saviour's love.

If we shall ever reach the better land,
And see the joys and honors Christ resigned
To bring salvation to all human kind ;
Then gaze on Bethlehem, the thorny crown,
The cross and tomb, then will we understand
The depth of love divine in looking down.



GOD'S LOVE AND MAN'S CONTRASTED

Just stand below the mighty flow
Where falls Niagara, and see
It downward pour with awful roar,
And think of its immensity,
And of its strength, and of the length
Of time that it has flowed to plough
That channel deep with sides so steep
Through flinty rock; and you will now
In imagery some likeness see,
To that immeasurable love,
Which full and free for you and me
Is ever flowing from above.

The mists that rise, to greet the skies,
Begotten of the cataract
Are like our love to God above,
So insignificant in fact;
But love so mean as ours must seem
Is welcomed by the God of all,
And glorified, like mists that ride
Above the plunging waterfall;
Transfixed with light, in colors bright
They glow like rainbows round His throne;
And yet we know, that love below
Is all of God, and not our own.

THE SUGAR MAPLE

The sugar maple in the spring-time bleeds,
And gives forth sweetness to supply the needs
Of those who make the wound, and strike the blow;
So likewise from the tree where Jesus died
There flows a never ceasing, healing tide,
To sweeten every grief that we can know.

MIRROR LAKE AND ITS LESSONS

Within the vale Yosemite there lies
A lakelet at the foot of mighty cliffs,
Which lift their snow-crowned summits to the skies;
And standing at its margin, one may see
Stupendous heights reflected perfectly
As in a mirror of gigantic size.

You see the clouds a mile below you pass
Across a strip of brilliant azure sky,
Like ships that sail upon a sea of glass.
"How deep is this fair lake?" was asked the guide.
"But a few feet at deepest," he replied.
It seemed as deep as those great cliffs were high.

Sometimes we see in man a wondrous love,
That causes one to cry in great surprise:
"How deep!" Not knowing that the Christ above
Is seen in him, as lakes reflect the skies;
For human love is very small at best,
Reflecting that which fills the Master's breast.



REFLECTING GOD

Be still, my soul, and lift thine eyes on high!
And be at rest just like the quiet sea,
Which on its surface mirrors all the sky.
O let me, Saviour, calmly trust in thee;
And on thy precious promises rely,
Reflecting thus thine own divinity!

ENDURE!

I saw the fiery snow-plant glow
Upon the edge of melting snow,
On bold Sierra's lofty height.
It was indeed a novel sight,
To see that blossom growing there,
Exposed to such a frosty air.
It seemed to speak in words of flame;
For to the soul this message came,
A message of a single word,
For this was all the spirit heard:
"ENDURE!"

I saw in Mariposa Grove
Among the giants, one that throve,
Although the fires had eaten through
Its very heart, so one could view
The heavens through this mighty tube;
Yet there it stood, and bore the rude
And cruel onslaught of the storm,
Yet ever clothed its stately form
In living green. The spirit heard
Repeated once again that word:
"ENDURE!"

SATAN'S YOKE

The yoke of Satan first is found
To be a wreath of flowers sweet,
Such as Hawaiians hang around
The necks of those they love to greet;
But with his blossoms are entwined
The deadly nightshade, other banes,
Which wither soon, and leave behind
Their poisons rankling in the veins.

BEAUTY FOR ASHES

God clothed the hills with beauty. Mighty trees
 As straight as arrows lifted verdant spires
 O'er Nature's temple, where the birds and bees
 Made fitting music, being Nature's choirs.
 The incense gathered by each passing breeze
 Expressed the fragrant blossoms' sweet desires.

Man came, and laid the lovely forest low,
 And swept the undergrowth with scorching flame,
 Till naught was left but ugliness and woe;
 But God is good, and He will clothe again
 The hills with verdure, and will cause to grow
 New forests through His agents, sun and rain.

How many hearts were like a garden fair
 Until the spoiler entered the domain,
 And Passion's fires consumed the beauty there,
 Till nothing but the ashes now remain;
 But He, who gives for ashes beauty rare,
 Will in His mercy bid them bloom again.

THE DESERT

A fierceness in the desert
 such as is not found elsewhere,
 Is manifested in the burning
 sun and throbbing air;
 The rocks are thunder riven,
 and the sands are tossed by storms;
 The very plants protect themselves
 with cruel spines and thorns;
 'T is here the lurking serpent
 and the lizard find a home;
 Yet God is in the desert
 keeping watch above His own.

THE HISTORY OF THE SCARLET POPPY

Through the glorious, poppy starred meadows in May
Once a botanist leisurely strolled;
He was charmed with the garment of Nature so gay,
All embroidered with flowers of gold,
Which was spread at his feet on that beautiful day,
Like a map of the heavens unrolled.

He beheld in one blossom a curious streak,
Like the crimson one sees in the sky
At the setting of sun. This red trace seemed to speak
To the scientist's sensitive eye
Of a future; and therefore he carried the freak
To his beautiful garden near by.

There the poppy was planted, and tended with care;
And at last when its seeds were mature,
They were sown, and they grew. The result was a rare
New variety, which to be sure
Was not all that he hoped, but the prospect was there
Of a crimson increasingly pure.

But the scientist suffered no bloom to survive
Which refused to respond to his will;
All the pure yellow died. Those with red alone thrived,
And this process continued until
By selecting each time the most red, he contrived
In the end his design to fulfill.

Like to plants in the Master's great garden are we,
Which receive from His hand tender care.
Only those that respond, and become that which He
Has designed them to be will He spare;
Only those in whose hearts He is able to see
Through the crimson some Christlikeness there.

"ALL IS WELL!"

One time in mid Atlantic, when
The waves were rolling high,
And spray was flying through the air
Beneath a leaden sky;
A mighty billow reached, and tore
A life-boat from the side
Where it was hung, and fiercely bore
The prize away with pride.

The ship would shiver, as the waves
Would dash with awful roar
Across the deck, and passengers
Were longing for the shore;
But when the storm was at its worst,
We faintly heard a bell,
And then a voice above the storm,
Proclaiming: "All is well!"

And all was well; for on the bridge
We saw the captain's form.
He knew the sea, and knew his ship.
He brought us through the storm.
O soul, by billows roughly tossed
Upon life's stormy sea,
Dismiss thy fears! Thy Captain trust,
For all is well with thee.

"I AM THE VINE, YE ARE THE BRANCHES"

Broken off, the branch will die.
Separated, so will I.
Life is union with the tree.
Joined to Christ is life to me.
Joined to Christ, the living vine,
Life and fruitfulness are mine.

THE SHELTERING WINGS

The mother hen gathers her young to her breast,
When darkness or tempest is near;
And under her wings there is shelter and rest
And comfort, with nothing to fear.

She knows of the danger, and over her brood
Is ever her sharp, watchful eye;
She leads them about in their search after food,
And warns them when danger is nigh.

She sees in the distance a hawk, and her call
Is heard by the wee downy things.
The hen cannot rest till her little ones all
Are under her sheltering wings.

The Saviour is calling, "O come unto me!"
He offers us all that we need
For safety and comfort; and yet can it be,
That many His call will not heed?



NATURAL THEOLOGY

The microscope another world
Reveals to our astonished gaze;
The telescope a million suns
To the astronomer displays.
Thus science shows a greater God
Than Hebrew prophet ever knew;
The universe doth now unfold
A larger Bible to our view.

THE SONG OF THE UNIVERSE

When stars, like drops of water
 flung from finger-tips divine,
Were hurled to do the bidding
 of their Maker, and to shine;
They sweetly sang in chorus—
 as they measured off the years—
The praise of their Creator
 in the music of the spheres.

Each sun with worlds attendant,
And clothed in light resplendent,
And all on Him dependent
 sang the song the spirit hears.

In circles never ending
 they around each other go;
Some with a rapid motion,
 others with a movement slow;
Yet all to music turning,
 they revolve in perfect time;
And join in mighty chorus,
 singing sweetly as they shine.

Their voices weary never
Of singing all together,
And singing on forever,
 making melody divine.



FREEDOM

The worlds are held by unseen chains,
Which bind them to their central suns;
And even suns themselves are bound
To something stronger still than they
By their Creator's sovereign law.
They are but things devoid of sense;
But if he will, a man may break
God's laws, and wander far from Him,
Like vagrant comet from the sun
Out into space and darkness deep;
Or drawing nearer to the source
Of light effulgent, he may shine
In glory like the morning star,
Reflecting majesty divine.

IN A STRAIT BETWIXT TWO

O restless sea, how like to thine
This ever changing life of mine,
Betwixt contending forces tossed!
A force above us makes us rise
A little way; but still there lies
Beneath us both another power,
The earth, which draws us every hour
Down to herself, till all seems lost.

But better days for thee and me
Will come; for John saw no more sea—
Except a crystal one at rest—
In visions of the better land;
By which we clearly understand,
That peace is there; and naught shall draw
Us from our God; His holy law
Obeyed, we shall be fully blest.

"CANST THOU BIND THE SWEET INFLU-
ENCES OF THE PLEIADES, OR LOOSE
THE BANDS OF ORION?"

Orion means the Winter strong,
Which chains the streams, and spreads the snow,
And hushes every sweet bird's song,
And drives the sap of trees below
The ground. The limbs in sorrow wave;
They seem to clasp their frozen hands,
And pray for Spring to come, and save,
And loose them from Orion's bands.

By Pleiades is meant the Spring,
Which sets the ice bound torrents free;
The happy time when wild birds sing
Their sweetest songs on bush or tree.
They mean the time of youth and joy,
Resembling the sweet month of May;
Thrice happy he who might employ
Some charm to make this season stay.

There's One can loose Orion's power,
And even free us from the tomb;
And bid us rise, as comes the flower
From out the earth in lovely bloom.
His power binds the influence
Of Pleiades in other spheres
Than this; and gives in truest sense
The spring of youth through endless years.

TO EVERY MAN HIS WORK

If all the blossoms had one hue,
 If all were painted red,
How we should long for white or blue
 Or other tints instead.

If all the flowers had one scent,
 If all were like the rose
In fragrance, would it bring content
 To the exacting nose?

If all the birds should sing one song,
 The sweetest one could hear;
Would not the melody ere long
 Grow tiresome to the ear?

Some blooms are fragrant, others gay,
 Some birds are brightly dressed,
But have no music; 'tis the way
 Of Nature, and is best.

In nature we can never see
 Two landscapes—as you know—
Alike in features. Every tree
 Has its own way to grow.

There is a place for every man.
 Just be what you were meant
To be in the Creator's plan;
 And learn to be content.

COMPENSATION

The plough-boy stopped to mop his brow.
He saw the parson riding by
In comfort. Leaning on his plough,
He watched him, and he heaved a sigh
Of envy; and the country lout
Made resolution then and there
To be a preacher, ride about,
Receiving welcome everywhere.

A half a score of years have passed.
The farmer's boy now rides along
The highway; for he is at last
A minister. He hears the song
Of those who labor in the field;
They seem so strong and free from care.
He envies them, and finds revealed
Some compensation everywhere.

One day I climbed the heights, to find
A lovely view of land and sea;
The ships were sailing with the wind.
I said, "Henceforth the hills for me!"
The valley seemed confined and still,
And smoke obscured the busy town;
It seemed much better on the hill
That day, as I stood looking down.

NATURE'S TEACHINGS

Well pleased, I sought the heights once more ;
The scene was changed, a bitter gale
Was blowing ; fogs concealed the shore ;
But sweet and peaceful seemed the vale.
As gladly I the hills resigned,
To seek below a softer air,
This thought came stealing o'er my mind :
"There's compensation everywhere."



THE SPRING IN DEATH VALLEY

In the region called Death Valley
Weary, thirsty, on the brink
Of despair, beneath a sage-bush
Waiting for the sun to sink,
Lay a man almost exhausted—
It had been a dreadful day—
But as evening came, arising,
He proceeded on his way.

Guided by a hand he knew not,
Finally he reached a spring,
Where he drank, and in the gladness
Of his heart began to sing.
Then he shouted, little thinking
That a living soul was near ;
But an answer like an echo
From the desert reached his ear.

NATURE'S TEACHINGS

Then he called again, and this time
Nearer, louder the reply ;
Guided by his voice, two weary
Travelers about to die,
To the spring from out the darkness
Staggered. They had heard the cries
Of the stranger, and pressed forward,
Though almost too weak to rise.

Then they told about some others
Of their party, men so weak
That they could not make a motion,
And so parched they could not speak.
Then the finder of the fountain
Filled his bottle at the pool,
Started out into the darkness
With the water fresh and cool.

By and by he found the lost ones,
Put the water to their lips,
Aided them to reach the fountain,
Where they drank not little sips,
But abundantly. What lesson
Learn we from this story true?
Those who find the Living Water
Surely know what they should do.



THE SUN'S BATTLE WITH THE FOG

The fog came in one afternoon
From off the sea, and settled down
With all its chilliness and gloom
Upon our lovely bay and town.
It seemed as though the lord of day
Had left his throne, his seat of light,
While in his stead the fog held sway,
And blotted all things from our sight.

The morning came, and still the cloud
Above the city and the bay
Was hanging like a mournful shroud.
The sun unseen began the fray.
He sent his arrows bright and swift,—
Each one a shining golden ray,—
To pierce the bank of fog, and lift,
And drive the shattered foe away.

There was no noise or battle's din;
By gentle means the fight was won.
So righteousness will conquer sin,
And victory through Christ will come.
The risen Sun with healing wings
Ascends, and brighter grows the day;
That Sun of which the prophet sings
Will drive the mists of sin away.



THE SUNFLOWER

It is known that the sunflower follows the sun
From the first streak of day till with brilliant display
He retires in the west, when the long day is done.
She retains through the night, while he hides from her
sight,

His magnificent image concealed in her breast;
And she grows in this way more and more every day
Like the glorious one she considers the best.
We may practice the sunflower's beautiful art.

We may look up above, and rejoice in the love
Of our Saviour, and carry in our inmost heart
The reflection of One, who is truly the Sun
And the light of the world, that His glory may shine
Through our lives, until we shall in some slight degree
Bear resemblance to Jesus our Saviour divine.



THE POPPY

Behold the poppy golden as the sun;
Her velvet petals furling o'er her breast,
As slowly sinks the lord of day to rest!
The moon and stars that beautify the sky
Delight her not; for them she has no eye.

But in the morning feeling his warm kiss,
Again she will unfurl her cloth of gold,
And show him all her heart. She is not bold,
But ever constant, loving only one,
And thus has grown in likeness to the sun.

NATURE'S TEACHINGS

AFFLICTIONS

Afflictions are the winds that rouse
The lake, which else would lie
Asleep, and stagnate. Thus to drowse
At ease is but to die.
The wind that makes the branches bend
May seem unkind, but proves a friend
To strengthen, and to try.

Afflictions purge away the dross,
Like fire that purifies ;
No good will suffer any loss,
The evil only dies.
The light afflictions of today—
If rightly borne—will be for aye
A memory to prize.

Afflictions are the heavy wheels
That crush the sugar-cane,
But bring out sweetness. Trial feels
Unpleasant, but each pain
Is meant in some way for our good,
And would, if rightly understood,
Be estimated gain.

PHOTOGRAPHY

A hundred million miles or so
The sunlight swiftly came,
To paint a picture on the film
Made ready for the same ;
And this is like the love of God,
Which human hearts receive.
How fair the picture in the souls
Of all who will believe !

LAMENTATION OF THE LEAVES

The autumn wind came sweeping by,
Which caused the withered leaves to sigh;
It seemed so hard to them to lie
 Upon the ground;
No more to deck the graceful trees,
And flutter in the passing breeze,
Delighting happy birds and bees
 Should they be found.

Yet leaves, you lived unselfishly;
You gave your carbon to the tree;
You purified the air for me
 And all that breathe;
Contentedly your race was run
In shadow or in glowing sun,
And well your useful work was done;
 Why should you grieve?

To leaves that flourished long ago
We owe the rays that brightly glow
Upon our hearths. You do not know
 The good you do.
Your work is done! Sweet be your rest
Upon the earth, your mother's breast!
Your way of living is the best.
 We honor you.

NATURE'S TEACHINGS

Like humble leaves upon the tree,
No matter what our place may be,
Let each one work contentedly
 In shade or sun.
May we so help to purify
Our neighborhood, that when we die,
We, too, may hear the Master cry:
 "Well done! Well done!"



THE GOLDEN GATE

A pretty name! The Golden Gate.
It is a deep and narrow strait
Bedecked with cliffs on either side,
And through it flows the changing tide;
The seals, the watch-dogs of the sea,
About this portal constantly
Their barking mingle with the roar
Of billows dashing on the shore.
Within is peace, and vessels lay
At anchor on the quiet bay.

O that our hearts like this fair bay
Might be! O may we as we pray
At morn and eve receive the tide!
O let the Golden Gate swing wide,
And let the cleansing stream flow in,
To purge our hearts from every sin!
Then though the storms without may roar,
And surges break upon the shore,
Within shall constant peace abide.
O let the Golden Gate swing wide!

INFLUENCE

One drops a tiny thistle seed ;
A little act, yet from it springs
A hundred seeds with downy wings
Producing soon ten thousand more,
To curse the land from shore to shore.

A spark is dropped through carelessness ;
A little act, yet from it springs
A wave of flame, which on the wings
Of wind across the prairie flies,
And everything before it dies.

A pebble breaks the glassy lake ;
A little act, yet from it springs
A circle, chased by other rings,
Which ever widen, till they reach,
And die upon the distant beach.

Our little unremembered acts
Still live, and ever onward flow
In larger circles, as they go
Forever onward, till that shore
Is reached, when time shall be no more.

RICHES AND POVERTY

Silks and satins often cover very heavy hearts.
Gold and jewels cannot save the rich from Trouble's
smarts.

David as a shepherd boy could far more sweetly sing,
Than when in great Jerusalem he lorded it as king.

WHO KNOWS?

Why say that life is incomplete,
When like a flower frail and sweet
It runs its little course so fleet,

Then goes?

Perhaps it now is blooming fair,
A blossom in a purer air;
Are earth's beginnings finished there?

Who knows?

We know not now, but shall some day;
So when our flowers fade away,
And sadness fills our hearts, we say:

"God knows."

The farmer knows, when sowing grain,
That it must die, to live again
In fuller life. Death may be gain.

God knows.

Why mark the grave with broken stone?
The end of life to Him alone
Who gave that life is fully known.

He knows.

We only make beginnings here.
Completion to another sphere
Than this belongs. Be of good cheer!

God knows.



GOD KNOWS

He that paints the lily bell,
And notes the sparrow's fall;
He that feeds the hungry birds,
And answers when they call;
He that clothes the grassy field
Most surely knoweth all
His children's needs, and everything
That shall to them befall.

He that heareth every throb
In every human breast;
He that treasures up the tears
From eyes by sorrow pressed;
He that numbers all our hairs
Most surely knoweth best
What we require; then may we not,
This knowing, sweetly rest?



TRUST

God's thoughts are not like ours, for they
embrace
Eternity. The good of every race
In all the universe is in His plan,
And has been since the universe began.
We try to measure with our little mind
The thoughts of the Omnipotent, but find
We fail to comprehend. We have no line
To fathom, or to measure the Divine.
Believing God knows all, we calmly rest,
Assured that everything is for the best.

"THEY SHALL MOUNT UP WITH WINGS
LIKE EAGLES"

Is the eagle unkind when she stirs up the nest,
That the eaglets may learn how to fly?
They may think so at first, but they find she knew best,
As they mount in the glorious sky.

They will joy as they look at the old broken nest,
And remember their home down below;
Now they mount toward the sun and the tempest they
breast,
And the blessing of freedom they know.

Is our Father unkind when He breaks up our nest?
Not at all. It is done in His love,
That instead we may seek a more glorious rest
In the mansions eternal above.

What is death but the tearing away of the nest,
That to glories above we may rise?
When our loved ones are taken, our Father knows best;
He would have us look up to the skies.



THE CAUSE OF DARKNESS

When the sun seems to set at the close of the day,
'Tis the earth turns away from her light;
So the Lord is a sun unto those who obey,
While to those who forsake comes the night.

SAFE IN THE FATHER'S ARMS

While bathing on the ocean shore,
Within his arms a father bore
His clinging, trusting child,
The water was both deep and rough,
But father's strength was quite enough
To keep him; so he smiled.

And when a larger billow rolled,
A wall of water uncontrolled,
The father lifted high
His boy above the curling wave,
And proved each time his strength to save,
For all passed harmless by.

So will our Father hold us high,
Till all the billows have gone by,
And all life's storms are o'er;
With every wave we learn to know
His arms are lifting us, and so
We trust Him more and more.

THE SOUL'S ATTITUDE

As trees spread wide on every side
Their verdant hands to catch the rays
Of light, which glows on sunny days,
And moisture when the showers fall;
So Lord to Thee—just like the tree—
Our souls would reach out eagerly,
To take in that beneficence,
Which ministers to every sense
Of all thy creatures great and small.

DEATH IS NOT SAD

Death is not sad, 'tis but the wind,
That blows the petals from the tree;
The better part is left behind,
To grow to full maturity.

The outward part that makes the show,
The petals fall, and so must we,
In order that the soul may grow
To be what God would have it be.

The petals are not useless things,
They call the bee and butterfly;
But when their work is done, on wings
Outstretched to catch the breeze, they fly.

We may this earthly life compare
To that of flowers of a day;
And yet we must in it prepare
For life that shall endure for aye.

If wrongly lived, this life is sad.
'Tis death that sets the spirit free.
With work well done, we should be glad
To fall like petals from the tree.



THE WINGS OF THE MORNING

If we could take the wings of morn,
And on the pinions formed of light
To some far region wing our flight,
Is there in the most distant sea
A place where we could hide from Thee?
Contains the universe a spot
Or hiding-place where Thou art not?

If we could take the wings of morn,
And fly as quickly as the light
To any place beyond Thy sight,
We would not take them as a gift;
But we would take those wings to lift
Us, Saviour, to thy loving breast,
And flying there, would be at rest.

IN GOD WE TRUST

As hills are round Jerusalem,
The Lord is round us all,
We know full well; and yet we build
A puny little wall
Around ourselves, and come to trust
In this, forgetting that we must
Upon our Father call.

Sometimes the Lord who formed the hills
Shakes down our barricade;
That we may learn to trust in Him,
And not what we have made
And piled up with our feeble hands,
As stocks and houses, bonds and lands,
When God should be our aid.

BUDDING

Far and wide a rose-vine spread,
Shedding petals white as snow
From the trellis over head
On the garden path below.

But the gardener one day,
Looking on this vine with pride,
Planned a mantle new and gay
For the rose he called "The Bride."

So he chose from roses rare,
Golden colored, pink, and red,
Buds which he removed with care,
That they with "The Bride" might wed.

Soon engrafted in the vine,
Strengthened by her life, they grew,
And rewarded her in time
With a robe of rainbow hue.

Christ is called the vine; and we
May be grafted into Him
Who is spotless purity,
Absolutely free from sin.

Individuality
Is not lost, when we unite
With His life our own. We see
Roses red among the white.

Self remains, but purified,
Strengthened, sweetened, made divine.
Let us then in Him abide,
Who is called the Living Vine.

THE WATER SPIDER

The water spider weaves a sack-like nest,
And fills with air the tiny diving-bell ;
This strange contrivance makes a place of rest ;
The air she brings enables her to dwell
In peace and safety in the water, where
She still is wrapped about with upper air.

So may we bring to earth an atmosphere
Which is divine, and wrap us in this robe
Of purity ; and nothing need to fear,
Though for a time the world is our abode.
In God we live and move, unharmed by sin.
So long as we are wrapped about by Him.



WAITING FOR THE MASTER

As the mountains robed in white,
Stand in all their purity
Through the long and dreary night,
Saviour, we would wait for Thee.

As the mountains greet the sun,
Smiling when his face they see ;
So dear Lord, when Thou shalt come,
Gladly will we welcome Thee.

THE SUNSET

Across the sunset sky all red
What seemed an angel's wing was spread,
All radiant with lovely light;
And every little downy fold
Was flecked with crimson or with gold
In colors luminous and bright.

Too beautiful to linger long
Above our earth, it was withdrawn
From human sight. The glory sped
On with the sun; but left behind
A lesson written on the mind,
This helpful thought which came instead:

"Some clouds we need at eventide
In life's fair sky, for glorified
By Him who is our hope and light,
They make the evening of life's day
The sweetest, e'er we fly away,
To share with Him His glory bright."

PATIENCE

A delicate bud may be torn apart,
To hasten the blooming hour;
It only exposes the sensitive heart,
And ruins the promised flower;
'Tis better to wait for the right time to come,
When under the quickening rays of the sun,
The petals shall slowly unfold one by one,
Perfected through sunshine and shower.

LIKE RAINDROPS

The sun shines on the sea, and mists arise
To form the clouds which float about the skies;
So Infinite, our lives have sprung from Thee,
Beginning in Thy light and purity.

But as the moisture falls to earth as rain,
And contact with the ground results in stain;
So have our lives contaminated been
By contact with the world, and stained with sin.

As finally the raindrops find the sea
From which they sprang, so may our souls to Thee
Return; and by this union purified,
In Thee forevermore in peace abide.

USE IT OR LOSE IT.

We must use it or lose it! The it here applies
To each object controlled by us under the skies;
To both muscle and brain, and to glittering gold,
For all things unemployed will waste, rust, or mold.
Every treasure that's buried, or hoarded away
Will be missing when wanted on some future day.

We must use it or lose it! But then over-use
Of these precious endowments amounts to abuse;
For the prodigal using of muscle or brain,
Or of senseless machine will result in a strain.
Therefore labor should always be followed by rest.
Such a rule for our guidance will surely prove best.

SWEET-PEAS

Fairy hands are gently waving
Tinted kerchiefs in the breeze,
Scented with the rarest perfumes
To attract the passing bees;
By the odors most delicious
They are ever giving, these
Blossoms have the proud distinction
To be always called Sweet Peas.

How they climb aloft like sailors,
To unfurl their flags above;
By their clinging and their sweetness
Speaking to our hearts of love;
Grasping with their slender fingers
Anything by which to climb;
Emblem of a true ambition
Is the dainty Sweet-Pea vine.

A PRAYER FOR GUIDANCE

As a shepherd leads his sheep
Into pastures fresh and green
And beside the crystal stream,
Master, lead Thou me.

As the mariner his ship,
Buffeted by winds and gales,
Safely o'er the ocean sails,
Master, guide Thou me.

As disciples of the Christ
Learned to know the perfect way,
Growing wiser day by day,
Master, teach Thou me.

BE PATIENT!

Though snow is lying on the ground,
And all the flowers gone,
And not a singing bird is found
To cheer you with his song ;
Though cruel Frost has stripped the trees,
And left their branches bare,
To shiver in the icy breeze,
And Death reigns everywhere ;

Be patient! They will come again
With the returning sun.
The woodland will again be gay
And vocal with the hum
Of insects and the cheerful song
Of birds, and sweet with bloom.
Be patient! It will not be long.
The spring is coming soon.

THE BRIGHTER SIDE

When dreadful storms beat on the heads
Of other birds, the eagle spreads
His wings, and mounting high in air,
He finds the sun still shining there,
And gazes on the brighter side
Of clouds that seemed so dark and wide.

Thus may we in the hour of prayer
Renew our strength, forget our care,
Mount up on wings as eagles do
Above life's storms, until we view
The golden lining from above,
And know the clouds were sent in love.

NATURE'S TEACHINGS

WHAT CHRIST IS TO ME

What the sun is to the flower,
What the rainbow to the shower,
What the river to the sea,
That and more is Christ to me.

What the stars are to the sky,
What the light is to the eye,
What the ground is to the tree,
That and more is Christ to me.

What the sea is to the ships,
What the spring to thirsty lips,
What the nectar to the bee,
That and more is Christ to me.

What the ore is to the mine,
What the trellis to the vine,
That and more will ever be
Jesus Christ my Lord to me.

THE RAINBOW

'Tis when the heavens weep, we know,
That rainbows can be seen;
So when the clouds are hanging low,
God's declarations gleam.

As raindrops bend the rays of light,
To form the bow that cheers;
God's promises break on the sight
Most bright through falling tears.

THE VALE OF TEARS

This life is called a vale of tears,
And yet we find the way
That leads us onward through the years
Is often bright and gay
With lovely blossoms, which bestow
Their fragrance on the breeze;
While birds regale us as we go
With music from the trees.

Some stones there are to bruise the feet;
Our hands are sometimes torn
With briers, for 'mid roses sweet
Will lurk the cruel thorn;
But these are trifles. Let us sing
As we go on our way,
And try to learn some useful thing
From every passing day.

What lies beyond this vale of tears
A mortal cannot know;
But we may fill the passing years
With blessings as they go.
The hours are flying fast away,
Our race will soon be run;
So let us do what good we may
Before the set of sun.



THE HIGHEST BEAUTY

Flowers—in the sweetest language—
Speak of beauty, but they say:
“Ours is beauty mixed with weakness,
Lasting only for a day,
Followed soon by sad decay.”
One may hear from every leaf,
“This is beauty very brief,
Soon to pass away.”

But the mountains in their grandeur
Speak of beauty that will glow
Through the centuries unaltered,
Spite of stormy winds and snow;
Thus it is we come to know,
Beauty of enduring kind,
Loveliness of soul and mind,
Is the best below.

Like to blossoms is the beauty
Of the human form and face;
For we know that Time will alter
Every line of charming grace,
Which we now so fondly trace.
Hence the beauty of the soul,
Which endures while ages roll,
Holds the highest place.



THE TWO SPRINGS

There is an upper and a nether spring,
And both make glad this heritage of ours;
Beside the lower feathered songsters sing,
And by its margin bloom delightful flowers,
And luscious fruits are hanging o'er its brink;
Here worshipers of nature come to drink.

But there is a much purer, sweeter spring,
Which can be found some distance higher up;
Around this fountain holy angels sing,
And peace and joy are quaffed with every cup.
The lower spring is good; let none despise
Its waters; but the upper satisfies.

The nether spring will dry up by and by;
It ministers to senses that decay;
The upper one will always satisfy,
And grow in preciousness from day to day.
The upper font is Christ, who came to bring
The living water. Seek the upper spring!

NATURE'S TEMPLES

The forests always have been Nature's shrines;
Each summer shower seems a service there.
First comes the song of birds, then all is hushed
To stillness like to that of silent prayer;
Then holy-water sprinkled from the skies
Refreshes and adorns the leaves with pearls.
Amid the trees a haze is seen to rise,
Like incense from a thousand altar fires;
Then comes a burst of glory and of song,
Recessional by all the feathered choirs.

THE CENTURY-PLANT

The plant we call the Century
Has hidden in her heart
A dream of her futurity,
Which she cannot impart;
But after weary years a spire
Of loveliness will rise;
Her longings answered, her desires
Fulfilled, she blooming, dies.

Within our hearts concealed from view,
A longing not of earth
Is hidden. Like this plant we, too,
Must die to give it birth.
We long for things as yet unseen,
Which under fairer skies
Will bloom in beauty; and our dream
We, too, shall realize.

THE FIREFLY'S MESSAGE

"Firefly—with your little light
Flashing in the summer night—
Tell me, for I long to know
What it is that makes you glow,
Giving forth a little spark,
As you journey through the dark."

As the insect winged its way
O'er the lawn, it seemed to say,
Signaling the words: "Not mine
Is the glory. One divine
Placed the light within me, so
That I cannot help but glow."

"Thank you, firefly, for the thought,
And the lesson you have brought.
If the Christ in us abide,
Though we try, we cannot hide
Him, who is the light divine;
He will surely through us shine."



CHRIST THE MAGNET

As iron to the magnet springs—
As though it were possessed of wings—
By force we cannot well define;
So human souls are drawn to Thee,
O Saviour, hanging on the tree,
Attracted by Thy love divine!

While iron to the magnet clings,
It has a strength that thither brings
Like particles, and holds them there;
So, Saviour, may we cleave to Thee,
For only clinging thus can we
Attract the world Thy love to share.

As iron to the magnet flies,
So will we meet Thee in the skies,
When Thou shalt come to call us home;
For there's a bond of sympathy
Unseen, that draws all Thine to Thee,
And marks Thy people as Thine own.

NATURE'S TEACHINGS

THE CHANGING TIDE

The tide is out, the rocks are bare,
The white sands glisten in the glare
Of noon-tide on the ocean shore ;
The shell-fish, clinging to the side
Of rocks, are longing for the tide
To come, and cover them once more.

The tide comes up with swelling flood,
Rejoicing streams, concealing mud,
That left along their shores its stains ;
And every sea-born living thing
Finds shelter underneath its wing,
And for a time contentment reigns.

The tide comes up, and then goes down ;
So Fortune seems to smile or frown,
Some changes bringing every day.
The times seem good, and then seem bad ;
The heart is glad, and then is sad ;
The tide goes down, but not to stay.

At ebbing time in patience bide
The joyful hours of flowing tide.
While waiting, cling with courage true.
We need low tide as well as high ;
We need both clear and cloudy sky ;
All times are good, if we but knew.

THE PATTERN ON THE MOUNT

Let those who seek for guidance
Often climb the mount of prayer ;
And then make all according
To the pattern shown them there.

A PRAYER FOR LIGHT

As morning light comes stealing o'er the hills,
To trickle down the vale in golden rills,
Till darkness with its dampness and its chills
 Has had to flee;
And joy and brightness revel everywhere,
And incense from the flowers fills the air,
While feathered songsters chant their morning prayer
 Of praise to Thee;
So Light of Life to every darkened heart
Reveal thyself, and bid the night depart,
And something of thy radiance impart
 We humbly pray;
Let joy and sunshine occupy the place
Where Misery had dwelling. Show thy face,
And in thy presence Gloom's last lingering trace
 Shall fade away.



THE MOUNTAINS' BURDEN

The mountains like to giants seem;
 Their heads are lifted to the skies,
And in the sunshine brightly gleam
 Like purest silver. From their eyes
Flow tears enough to make a brook.
 Perhaps the mighty load of care
That fills the world, on which they look,
 Has changed to snowy white their hair.

NATURE'S TEACHINGS

CONSECRATION

Thou the potter, I the clay ;
Lord, I would not have my way.

Take me, hold me, make me, mould me
Use me in thy time and way.

Thou the sculptor, I the stone ;
Not my will, but Thine alone.

Take me, break me, ne'er forsake me,
Till Thine image I shall own.

Thou the builder, I the block ;
Some may praise and others mock.

Take me, set me, only let me
Rest on Christ, the Living Rock.

Thou the weaver, I the web ;
Not my way, but thine instead.

Take me, weave me, do not leave me,
Till complete in every thread.

THE VIOLET'S ADVICE

We knew well they were there, though concealing with care
Their chaste beauty beneath their broad sheltering leaves ;
For a perfume so rare was caught up by the air,
And thus wafted to us on the loitering breeze ;
And a message was carried to us from these flowers,
That were hiding so modestly in their green bowers.

By the ear quite unheard, for they spoke not a word
To those organs, and yet in a language most sweet
All the violets said from their low, leafy bed,

Where they nestled together not far from our feet :
"Never estimate worth by one's fortune or birth,
But by sweetness which they will for other folks shed."

NATURE'S TEACHINGS

THE SEA-SHELL

The sea-shell holds in memory,
Unchanged throughout the years,
The story of the raging sea,
And whispers in our ears
The murmur of the restless waves,
The sound of winds in ocean caves,
Which one distinctly hears.

And something hidden in the breast—
Within your soul and mine—
Which we may hear when at our best,
And in a quiet time,
Will tell us that we have been made
For better things, and must have strayed
Away from the Divine.

UNCONSCIOUS INFLUENCE

A bee crawled from a poppy bloom,
His pockets filled with gold.
So full that there was hardly room
Another grain to hold.
“What seems like gold is really bread,
And very light,” the wise bee said,
“And when with fragrant honey spread,
Its worth cannot be told.”
“This bee-bread in the glowing sun
Was baked, and flavored sweet
With nectar; now 'tis fully done,
And is indeed a treat.
The opium is very slight,
It makes our babies sleep at night,
Each tucked in its own cradle tight,
Does naught but eat and sleep.”

NATURE'S TEACHINGS

"O humble-bee, you little know—
As you from flower to flower
Pursue your journey—how you sow
The dust that makes the flour
To feed the higher human race,
And help the many plants that grace
The earth to fruitfulness! Your place
In life is one of power."



ELOQUENCE OF SILENCE

'Twas not in the tornado
That shattered Sinai's peak
Nor in the earthquake nor the fire
Jehovah seemed to speak;
But in the hush that followed
Elijah heard the Lord
In gentle whispers speaking,
And hearing, he adored.

The greatest poems are the songs
Which never have been sung.
The deepest feelings cannot be
Expressed by mortal tongue.
The deepest grief is always still,
As is the highest joy;
For then the tongue can find no words
To fittingly employ.

THE LOS ANGELES RIVER

"Is that the river?" asked an Eastern guest.
To call it such appeared to be a jest.
On looking closely, one beheld a stream
So tiny, that it scarcely could be seen;
A little, almost hidden, liquid thread
Was trickling in the spacious river-bed.

"No, that is not the river," one replied.
Around you cast your eyes on every side.
Behold those waving palms, those roses sweet,
Those pure and fragrant lilies at your feet,
Those orange groves which stretch for twenty miles,
In all this loveliness the river smiles."

The river never sought her life to save;
But sacrificing self, she freely gave
Her all. Thus doing, she herself has found
In luscious fruit and beauty all around.
Is this not like the teaching Jesus gave,
That he who loses life, the same shall save?

THE SUN'S METHOD

The sun arose like a golden ball,
And spun off a skein of light;
He smaller grew, as he climbed the blue,
But not a whit less bright;
He wound the skein all back again,
And when he sank from sight,
The golden ball had taken all,
And left us but the night.

THE UNCHANGING CHRIST

Islands rise out of the sea,
To be swallowed up again;
All is changing, Lord, save Thee.
Thou art evermore the same.

Stars called fixed will fade away;
Mountains crumble to the plain;
All but Thee must meet decay;
Thou art evermore the same.

Love of friends may not endure;
Many things may come to rend
Earthly ties; but we are sure
Thou wilt love us to the end.

Christ, who died on Calvary,
Bearing for our sakes the shame,
Will throughout eternity
Surely love us just the same.

MIZPAH

Mizpah means the Lord between us
Watches constantly.
As a shepherd o'er his sheep,
As a mother o'er the sleep
Of her babe, the Lord will keep
Watch 'twixt you and me.

Mizpah means the Lord between us
Watches night and day;
Seeing where the dangers lie,
Noting where the arrows fly,
With His ever wakeful eye
Guiding all the way.

THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE

"She was poor," people thought, little dreaming
Of a jewel of value untold,
Not a diamond skillfully polished,
Nor a ruby in setting of gold,
But a pearl large and perfect and lovely,
Which she wore 'neath her garment so old.

'Twas the gift of a king great in power,
Of a sovereign she had never seen ;
Yet compared to this jewel the dower
Of a princess would seem much too mean
To exchange for this gem, which each hour
Filled her heart with a rapture most keen.

She concealed in her bosom her treasure,
But its glory was not confined there ;
In the face and the acts of the owner
Its effulgence was seen everywhere ;
For there's nothing that can so embellish
Any life as this jewel so rare.

She has gone to her King with her treasure,
Far away from the regions of care ;
'Tis the one only earthly possession
One can carry away, but up there
It will be the chief glory forever,
This jewel beyond all compare.



WHERE TO FIND BEAUTY

Beauty has no hiding place.
One may always see her face
Mirrored in the pond where grow
Water-lilies white as snow.

On the shore where billows curl,
Tinted emerald and pearl,
One may see her in the spray ;
There is where she loves to play.

On the rainbow arch she stands,
Flinging jewels from her hands
To adorn the blushing rose.
In a moment off she goes.

In the evening she will fly
To the glowing western sky,
Where she robes herself in light,
Smiling to the world, "Good night."

While she gems the grass with dew,
She is not concealed from view ;
For her starry eyes still keep
Watch above us, while we sleep.

GROWTH

A blade of wheat from out the ground
Arose one autumn day,
And sang with gladness, for it found
This new life very gay ;
It was as yet quite near the earth
From which it lately sprang,
But for the blade this meant new birth,
And so with joy it sang.

NATURE'S TEACHINGS

This little blade so weak and small,
And bearing still the trace
Of earthiness, resembles all
Beginners in the race
Of Christian life; they feel a thrill
Of joy unknown before;
But such should never rest until
They reach to something more.

The blade had just begun to grow,
When came the chilling blast
Of winter with its frost and snow.
The little blade held fast
Its life, till winter had gone by;
And when the spring had come,
It grew apace, and lifted high
Its head to greet the sun.

This was the time of foolish pride,
Through which all Christians pass;
But we must not rest satisfied
With such a state. Alas!
There was not much but hollow show
Within the stalk thus far.
With grace divine we all may grow
Much better than we are.

At last a hundred grains of wheat
Were fully formed, and then
It humbly bowed, for it was meet
To serve the needs of men.
Thus Christ became the living bread,
And those who wish to be
Like him, must give themselves, instead
Of living selfishly.

"THE EVIDENCE OF THINGS NOT SEEN"

'Tis said by some that Joseph threw
The chaff—with thoughts of love—
Upon the Nile; thus people knew
There must be plenty of
Provision, for there floated by
The evidence of full supply
Of corn somewhere above.

So we who hunger here below
Some evidence may see
Of better things, and something know
Of immortality.
Some little fragments reach us here,
Which kindle in us hope and cheer
For that which is to be.

THE SOUL'S INSTRUMENT

The brain is but the organ of the soul,
The instrument on which the spirit plays;
When tuned aright, and under the control
Of Him who made it, grateful songs of praise
And sweetest harmonies and concords roll
Responsive to an influence divine.

Myself upon thine altar I would lay,
And pray Thee, Master, gently touch the keys,
That I in all I do, and think, and say,
May be in harmony with Thee, and please
My Maker. Lord, I would not have my way,
But ask that Thine be done instead of mine.

THE WATER OF LIFE

A spring is bubbling from the stones,
A cup is hanging near,
Which calls in no uncertain tones
To those with ears to hear:
"I by my presence signify
To every one that passeth by,
The free and copious supply
Of water always here!"

Yet many people pass the cup,
And spurn the crystal spring,
Preferring from the glass to sup
That which at last will sting;
But still the cup is hanging near
The spring that bubbles cool and clear,
A sign of readiness to cheer
The beggar or the king.

A sweeter Spring, which some refuse,
Is meant for great and small;
It flows for Gentiles and for Jews;
So wide has gone the call,
That whosoever will may come.
The fountain's free to every one.
This Living Water is the Son
Of God, who died for all.

"AS A MAN THINKETH IN HIS HEART,
SO IS HE"

Let the thoughts constantly dwell on the beautiful,
For as one thinks will his deeds surely be.
Time so employed will yield one a bountiful
Harvest from meadow and mountain and sea.

TO KEEP THE HEART CLEAN

Fill all the chambers of the soul,
And hang on every wall
Fair scenes of seas where billows roll,
And views of mountains tall,
And pictures of the flowers of spring,
Let beauty fill all space;
Leave room for no unholy thing
Within that sacred place.

Give ample space within the hall
Called memory to pure
And noble objects, to recall
The things that will endure.
The soul with beauty occupied
Will have no vacant place,
Where sinful longings can abide,
Or worthless things debase.



MENTAL PICTURES

Like cameras our minds each day
Are focused through the eye and ear
On many objects; in this way
Are made the pictures which appear
Within the halls of memory;
While some of these are very fair,
Some others have no right to be
Among the decorations there.

NATURE'S TEACHINGS

Impressions taken never fade.

Like negatives, they may be placed
One o'er another; but once made
Their lines can never be erased.
The photographs we take to-day
Are fixed indelibly, to last
And hang before the eyes for aye,
To be our record of the past.

This thought should cause us to take heed
As to the way we use our mind;
Of what we see, and what we read,
For by and by each one will find
The negatives, now stored away,
Brought forth again, and clearly shown,
The record for the judgment day,
To be revealed before God's throne.



DO NOT WORRY

Trust in God, and fear no ill,
That may come to you to-morrow;
He who bade the winds be still,
Can give rest in time of sorrow.

If to-morrow brings a cross,
He will give you strength to bear it;
If it brings some care or loss,
He will surely with you share it.

Do not worry! Jesus said,
There is one above, who numbers
Every hair upon your head,
One who neither sleeps nor slumbers.

NATURE'S TEACHINGS

He who sends the rain and dew
To the flowers in the wild,
Much more will take care of you;
They are things, you are His child.

REDEEMED

On old Kyoto's temple stairs
A woman having by her side
A cage of sparrows, caught with snares,
Was sitting, while the poor birds cried
To passers-by with sympathy,
To pay the price, and set them free.

A gentleman from out the throng
Undid the door, and set them all
At liberty. They flew with song
To nests in trees and temple wall.
They seemed to chirp while flying home
A thousand thanks in joyous tone.

Like foolish birds we have been caught,
But Jesus came to set us free.
He paid the awful price, and bought
Us all, to give us liberty;
But some will not come forth, nor heed
His call, "Ye shall be free indeed!"

The mighty sacrifice was made.
The door is open. You are free,
Because the price was fully paid
By Christ upon the cruel tree.
Let each accept it, nor again
Be caught by the great foe of men.

THE SEA OF LIFE

Like ships upon the sea of life
Are men. The surges that o'erwhelm
Are trials; and like winds at strife
Are doctrines; faith, the vessel's helm.
The sails which catch the changing winds
Of teaching represent, of course,
Those interested hearts and minds,
Which feel, and yield to reason's force.
The compass is the conscience true,
And hope the anchor of the soul.
The Bible shows us what to do,
It is our chart; but the control
Of rudder, sails and all should be
Committed to the Captain's hand
Through all the voyage o'er life's sea,
Until we reach the better land.

SPIRITUAL ASTRONOMY

Telescopes of proper size,
Hidden glories of the skies
Show, though veiled to common eyes.
But for one to see aright,
All the wonders of the night,
One must keep the lenses bright.

With the spirit clear and clean
Focused, so that naught between
It and Heaven intervene;
One can easily endure
To be weary, ill, and poor,
Knowing of the mansions sure.

THE EFFECT OF THE SUNLIGHT

A geranium show, many plants in a row,
A reward for the flower most fair;
To the judge's surprise, he awarded the prize
To what seemed the least likely child there.

Then he asked in his mild, gentle way of the child,
"Mary, how did you make the plant grow?"
"It was all through the sun," said the poor little one,
"There was no other cause that I know.

"In a garret quite high, away up in the sky,
Is our home, where two windows are all
We possess; but the light from the daybreak till night
On the one or the other must fall.

"From the first light of day I would have my plant stay,
Where it drank in the bright eastern sun;
But I always at noon to the west moved my bloom,
Where it staid till the long day was done.

"Then I watered it oft, to keep the earth soft,
And the buds slowly formed one by one.
Every hour of the day I would have my plant stay
In the life-giving light of the sun."

"We have learned what to do," said the judge, "for we, too—
Like your plant—need to stay in the light;
If we stay in the shade, we will wither and fade;
You have done what was perfectly right.

"We are truly God's plants, and the human heart pants
For the sunshine, the light of His love;
And we very well know, we must have this to grow
Into fitness for mansions above."

EASTER THOUGHTS

And perhaps the tree knows—
When the frosts and the snows,
And the death-dealing winter draw near—
Of new life, for she hints
By her beautiful tints
Of her hope for the spring of the year.

Are the sun and the tree
Really wiser than we,
To rejoice in the season of gloom?
No, indeed, for we, too,
Have the hope of a new,
Fuller life to come after the tomb.

THE GOLDEN TOUCH

We read of Midas, who was king
of Lydia of old,
Who prayed that he might have the gift
to turn all things to gold
That he might touch. This foolish wish
was granted, we are told.

He climbed a ladder which was changed
to gold beneath his feet;
He touched each stone upon the walls,
until in gold complete
The palace stood. No other could
with him in wealth compete.

NATURE'S TEACHINGS

He sat before a golden board
 upon a golden chair,
And touched his dishes, when behold!
 in burnished patterns rare
They glittered like the firmament;
 No common thing was there.

The coat he wore upon his back
 was woven out of gold.
It did not have a pleasant feel;
 He shivered from the cold;
A little wine might do him good
 from vintage rare and old.

He tried to drink, but choicest wine
 to gold was turned instead.
He took a little piece of food,
 which seemed to be like lead
Within his mouth. In vain he tried
 to eat his golden bread.

At last he cried in agony
 for water in his thirst.
So heavy was his grief, it seemed
 as though his heart would burst.
Of all the evils borne by man,
 this seemed to be the worst.

Then envy not the golden touch,
 which is by some possessed.
The simple, common things of life
 will always prove the best.
With food and raiment be content,
 and leave to God the rest.

LAUREL BLOSSOMS

Fluted cups in pink and white,
Fairies drink from them at night.
Have you seen a fairer sight
Than the laurels in the spring,
When the birds their sweetest sing
In the trees and on the wing?

Clustered cups 'mid freshest green
Lifted up by hands unseen
In a toast to Fairy Queen.
Butterflies and vagrant bees
Drink from vessels such as these
Nature's wine, which has no lees.

Fluted goblets brim to brim,
Marvelous the work of Him
Who has formed thy dainty rim
And thy structure, showing more
Than is found in human lore.
Listen, spirit, and adore!

THE SAFE COURSE

"I suppose that you know every danger below
This magnificent harbor," said I,
To a pilot one day, as the ship sailed away,
But he shook his gray head in reply.

Then he said by and by,—for he happened to spy
An expression denoting surprise,—
"It is needless to know all the dangers below,
I must know where the deep water lies.

"It is better for you to proceed as I do
On your voyage o'er life's troubled sea;
If you know the safe way, and from it never stray,
All will certainly be well with thee."



THE YELLOWSTONE RIVER AND CANYON

The Yellowstone, a serpent green
With flecks of white, comes gliding down
To seek the shady depths between
The mighty cliffs of buff and brown.

Just where the river seeks to hide,
And plunging downward, makes the falls,
Is where the great Creator tried
His colors on the canyon walls.

The colors of the sunset skies,
And tintings of the arching bow
Are there in all their fairest dyes
Such as no artist's work can show.

Like strip of jade with streaks of white
The river far below is seen
Still gliding on, half out of sight,
Like to a monster serpent green.

From out the canyon spires arise,
Which look like steeples red and tall,
Or fingers pointing to the skies,
To God, the maker of it all.

THE PERFECT REVELATION

By glancing 'round a person's home,
Much may be learned of him who dwells
Within its walls; for every tome
Upon the shelves a story tells
Of education. Pictures hung
Upon the walls at least infer
One's taste in art; each thing though dumb,
Can speak to us of character.

But in this way we never know
The owner; and, indeed, surprise
Must be our portion, when below
He comes, and looks us in the eyes,
And grasps us kindly by the hand,
And friendly words between us flow;
'Tis then the man we understand;
Before we guessed, but could not know.

This little world in which we live
Is like to an apartment small
In God's great mansion, but will give
Some hints of Him who made it all;
But how could we the Father know
Had He not to our human race,
In Jesus Christ come down below,
And spoken with us face to face?



WHERE TO FIND GOD

We believe that the mantle of God we may see
In the dome of the sky and the sweep of the sea,
In the sweet clover field where the bird and the bee
Are rejoicing from morning till night;
We believe that his image, though shaded and dim,
May be seen in humanity clouded by sin,
But reflected in all its perfection in Him
Who has come that we might have the light.



THE SECRET OF COMMUNION

As in wireless telegraphy, all must depend
On the instruments used to receive and to send
Being made to respond to vibrations though slight,
Like the ear of the mother that hears in the night,—
For affection has tuned it to hear without fail,
Though to other sounds deaf,—her dear babe's faintest wail;
Like the skilled engineer, who will hear, in the din
Of machinery, sounds which have meaning for him;
Thus can mind sympathetic flash message to mind.
When two souls are in harmony often they find
This is true. Surely Heaven is never too far
To respond to the souls that in unison are.
Every heart that is sweetly attuned by pure love
May communicate freely with Heaven above.

THE NEARNESS OF GOD

So far above us seems the sky,
Where fleecy clouds are floating by,
We gaze into the vault o'er head,
And think, "If we had wings to spread,
We, like the lark, ourselves would raise
Among the clouds, and pour out praise."

'Tis difficult to realize
That we are dwelling in the skies;
That heaven really wraps us round,
While we are treading on the ground.
To reach the sky we need not climb,
For we are in it all the time.

Just so God's Spirit everywhere
Surrounds us like the limpid air,
In which we live. He is not far
Above us like the distant star,
But ever with us day and night,
Though unperceived by mortal sight.



DAFFODILS

Daffodils in yellow frills
Nodding in the wind,
Dancing fairies of the spring,
Golden bells that never ring,
Many songs the wild birds sing
Of you and your kind.

THE SNOW

O snow upon the mountain height,
So beautiful, and clean, and white,
'Tis there alone you can the same
Unchanging purity retain!

The snow in city or in town
Is quickly soiled and trodden down
By careless feet. Contented stay
Upon the mountain top always!

The snow made answer, " 'Tis the will
Of God that I should turn the mill
And do what He would have me do.
I must come down, and so must you."

The snowflakes are like souls new born,
So sweet and pure in life's fresh morn;
O that they might continue so,
And spotless through life's journey go!

Of all the people that have been,
But one could say, "Which one of sin
Convinceth me?" This One, we know,
Was purer than the purest snow.

Upon the mountain top apart
One might keep purity of heart,
But who can stay forever there
With Christ upon the mount of prayer?

We must, like Him we serve, descend
To help the world, and be the friend
Of all in need; and yet through Him
Be kept from all defiling sin.

SUNSHINE

The sunshine falls like golden rain
On city, mountain, hill, and plain;
It drops upon the earth and sea,
And gently kisses every tree;
The blossoms thus aroused from sleep
Unclose their lovely eyes, and peep
At him who sends the golden shower
To every little waiting flower.

The healing, purifying rays
Bring death to germs, but give always
New health and vigor to the air,
And scatter blessings everywhere.
The sunshine with a happy smile
Embraces things both good and vile;
But never from the contact grows
Impure. It kisses mud and rose.

Oh, let us like the sunshine be,
And purify humanity
Like Christ, who was the Spotless One
And likened to the shining sun!
He touched the leper, and received
And ate with sinners, and relieved
All suffering while here below,
Yet kept himself as pure as snow.

BE HAPPY TO-DAY!

Sing little brook, and be glad while you may!
Sing and be gay, as you dance on your way!
When the mountains are passed,
You will slumber at last
In your mother's embrace, the great sea, so I say:
"Be happy to-day! Be happy to-day!"

HIDDEN SIN

A worm into a noble tree made way,
Until at last it reached the very heart;
Its course was followed by a slow decay,
An inward rottenness, which at the start
Was insignificant, but constantly
Increasing, it became a hollow shell
Which none suspected; for it seemed to be
Quite perfect, till one quiet day it fell
With awful crash, and sent a shudder through
The woodland. As the monarch prostrate lay
Revealing rottenness, concealed from view
Till then, it seemed in agony to say:
"Beware of secret sin! Though none may know
Of its existence at the present time,
It will, at last, end in one's overthrow,
As heart corruption caused this fall of mine."



GROWTH IN GRACE

The slender crescent in the western sky—
So frail and beautiful—is like a child
New born; but e'er a fortnight passes by,
The waxing moon will fill the sky with mild
And lovely splendor, shining all night long.
So should we grow more perfect day by day,
And shed more light, and sing a sweeter song
Through life, until at last we fade away.

HEALING LEAVES

Close by Marah's bitter waters
Grew the tree to make them sweet.
From the tree where Jesus suffered,
From his side, his hands, his feet
Flows a healing stream to sweeten
Every sorrow we may meet.

Heaven has a panacea,
Foliage from trees of life
For the healing of the nations,
For those wounded in the strife
All must wage with sin and sorrow,
Leaves with healing virtue rife.

Will you then be whole, my brother?
Here is medicine to bind
Up the broken heart. No other
Panacea can you find
That will comfort, heal, and strengthen
Every troubled heart and mind.

"YE ARE OF MORE VALUE THAN MANY
SPARROWS"

You poor little sparrows in grey, brown and black,
The Master has told us, that you do not lack
The care of our Father; for you cannot fall
Unnoticed by Him, who is Maker of all.

So low is your value,—a farthing for two,—
So homely, and yet the great God thinks of you;
Much more will He care for the children of men;
His Son as a ransom was given for them.

Then trust Him who heareth the birds when they cry,
And who never faileth their wants to supply.
Remember how those without storehouse or barn
Are fed day by day, and protected from harm.

HARDSHIPS ARE ESSENTIAL TO DEVELOPMENT

The foolish, timid sheep,—protected, fed,
In pastures green by quiet waters led,—
Has suffered much from too abundant care
Bestowed upon him for his flesh and hair;
All things provided, he has had no chance
To work out his salvation and advance,
Developing more brains and feet more fleet
And muscles tougher, not so good to eat;
With less of wool and more of spirit brave,
He might have found a way himself to save.

The Master sent his followers like sheep
Among the wolves. He did not always keep
Them by his side. He wanted them to be
As wise as serpents, while docility
Should make them like the doves in character.
From this and Nature's teachings we infer,
That hardships are among the things one needs,
And therefore always line the path that leads
To higher, better things. One must depend
On God and self, and struggle to the end.

CHASING BUBBLES

One chased a bubble called the world,—
An empty rainbow-tinted ball,—
But when his fingers round it curled,
It burst, and left his hand imperaled
As with a tear, and that was all.

BEAUTY IN DECAY

The ivy by its verdure brightens up the ruined tower,
And by its life and freshness seems to be possessed of power
To make the grim old castle smile in gladness once again,
As it rejoiced in ancient times when the abode of men.
More peaceful now and beautiful it seems in its decay
Than when in stirring days of old it made a brave display.

And is there not a living force that brightens up the face,
Just as the ivy does the ruined castle by its grace?
If in the bosom ever dwells the life that is divine,
Will it not add a beauty and a softness to each line,
Which in old age shall speak to all of inward peace and rest,
And make the closing days of such a life to be the best?

THE CACTUS

The cactus' needles differ from the pine's
In being sharper, pointing every way,
Proclaiming to all comers by these signs
Her selfishness, for each may hear her say:
"You touch me at your peril. Keep away!
No portion of my substance will I give
To feed the hungry. At a distance stay!"
Too many like this selfish cactus live.

The cactus getting and retaining all,
The sections grow to be so corpulent
That they from their own weight decay and fall,
And in this way is retribution sent.
This probably is what the Master meant
In trying to instill a nobler aim
Than getting, which can never bring content.
Those who would save their lives shall lose the same.

THE SOURCE OF STRENGTH

A legend tells us, Hercules,—
In seeking for the wondrous trees
On which the golden apples grew,
Of which he was to bring a few,—
Antæus met, who blocked his way,
And then began a fearful fray.

The giant Hercules soon found
Each time Antæus touched the ground
He from the earth received new strength.
So firmly grasping him, at length
He raised him bodily in air,
And easily subdued him there.

We find the opposite is true
Of Christians, who their strength renew
By mounting on the wings of prayer
Above all worldly things, to where
The Father meets them as they pray,
And gives them strength for every day.

"HE GIVETH HIS BELOVED SLEEP"

O mourner, wipe your tears away!
"He giveth his beloved sleep."
A perfect rest, then comes the day,
When waking, never more to weep,
Invigorated, young and strong,
The ransomed shall together meet,
And join in the redemption song,
"He giveth his beloved sleep."

EVENING IN THE GRAND CANYON OF THE COLORADO

The sun had set. The pallid moon arose,
 And stretched her ghostly fingers long and white
 Between the cliffs, to where the river flows
 Far, far below, and with them raised the light
 Fantastic mists, which soon the canyon filled
 In shape like dreadful dragons, which drew near,
 And ever nearer, till a horror chilled
 The blood of the beholder; then with fear
 He turned and from the terror fled away
 To seek companionship with fellowmen,—
 Where lamps supplied the place of vanished day,—
 Until the morning light should come again.

THE GRAND CANYON OF THE COLORADO

Grand and awful is the canyon
 Where the shadows ever stay,
 Where the Colorado River
 Tries to hide itself away.

Deep and fearful is the chasm,
 But when kissed at morn and night
 By the rising and the setting
 Sun, it is a gorgeous sight.

Then the cliffs along the margin
 And the pinnacles that rise
 Out of the abyss turn crimson,
 Blushing in their glad surprise.

Rosy clouds may then be trailing
 Just above the canyon's rim,
 While a mile below the torrent
 Rushes through the shadows dim.

THIRST FOR GOLD

A-thirst for gold,
Men brave the cold
Of Yukon's icy land,
While all the time
A richer mine
Is waiting close at hand.
Are men so blind,
They think to find
In gold a lasting gain?
With wings some day
'Twill fly away,
And what will then remain?



THE BURNING BUSH

The desert bush so parched and dry,
That stunted, useless, thorny tree
Which Moses saw, how like to me!
But thou, O God, didst glorify
It with thy presence. O abide
In me, that some may turn aside
As Moses did, inquiring why
A man may differ from his kind!
And grant that such in me may find
Thyself revealed. For this I sigh.

NATURE'S TEACHINGS

O great "I AM" within me glow,
And cause my countenance to shine
Like Moses' face with light divine,
That others seeing this may know
Of thine indwelling. Let them see
How thou canst take a thing like me,
In parts so poor, in tongue so slow,
And make me something like to thee.
O Flame divine, I pray to be
In some way used Thyself to show!

MUCH DEPENDS ON THE VIEW-POINT.

'Tis said, some blind men came to see
What like the elephant might be.
Their eyes were in their finger tips,
Which were quite liable to slips.
One seized the tail, and thus he spoke:
"The elephant is like a rope."
One grasped his leg, and then cried he:
"The elephant is like a tree!"
One felt his long proboscis shake,
And said: "The beast is like a snake."
Another felt the monster's side,
And with astonishment he cried:
"The elephant appears to me
A good deal like a house to be!"
This narrative may not be true,
And yet upon the point of view
So much depends. We all are blind
By nature, and you may not find
In feeling after things divine
Experiences like to mine.
So let us have broad charity
With those with whom we can't agree.

INSPIRATION POINT

'Tis not the massive cliffs alone,
El Capitan or the Half Dome,
That make Yosemite well known;
'Tis not the lofty falls that flow
Forever from the melting snow,
To break in fleecy foam below ;

'Tis not the river formed by these,
Which scurries down among the trees
In eagerness to reach the seas ;
Not cliff alone so grand and tall,
Not river, trees, or waterfall,
Not any one of these, but all ;

Combined they make Yosemite.
One spot there is from which to see
The whole in its sublimity.
'Tis Inspiration Point well named,
Because from there may be obtained
A view of all that makes it famed.

God's Word is like this valley fair.
What heights and depths of love are there !
Naught with its beauty can compare.
First Inspiration Point attain,
And then with heart and soul aflame,
Drink in the glories of the same.



A TIME FOR EVERYTHING

The fruit tree blooming in the Spring is fair
To look upon. Its blossoms fill the air
With subtle fragrance, speaking in a mute
Sign language, of a future time when fruit
Will hang in luscious ripeness on each bough.
'Tis fitting for the tree to blossom now.

But strange to say, some fruit trees burst in bloom
In autumn. Cruel frosts will come to doom
To death such foolishness. It makes one sad—
To see such spectacles—instead of glad.
The autumn should not have the bloom of May.
The man should put all childish things away.

THORNS CHANGED TO ROSES

An ancient legend tells us
That the crown of woven thorn
The Saviour wore to roses changed
Upon the Easter morn.

'Tis but a legend, yet we know
The thorns that vex us now
Will on the resurrection morn
Be flowers for the brow.

We read of Aaron's rod, which brought
Forth buds, and burst in bloom;
So will the rod that smites us change
To blossoms in the tomb.

Then patiently endure the thorn,
Which may to you be sent;
It will at last to flowers change,
And you will be content.

NATURE'S TEACHINGS

THE CHILD'S RESOURCES

Every child is as strong as his father as long
As he clings to his dear father's hand;
For he knows all the strength that is stored in that arm
May be his to protect him from all that would harm,
May be his any time on demand.

And the child is as rich as his father may be,
Though possessing no money or land;
So the child has no longing for silver and gold,
Knowing well that his father's possessions untold
Will be his any time on demand.

Though the child is less wise than his father, he learns
In a little while to understand,
That wisdom as well as the riches and power
Of the Father are portions of his children's dower,
And are theirs any time on demand.

THE MISTLETOE

A parasitic plant, the mistletoe—
A pale and sickly thing like those that grow
In dark and noisome dungeons—seems content
To cling to others, stealing nourishment,
Which was not gathered for such plants as these,
Which suck the juices from the nobler trees.

How many people, like the mistletoe,
Depend on others for what they would know,
And take from books the thoughts by others gleaned,
And feed forever,—like to babes unweaned—
On mental pabulum which others ate,
And so—like parasites—degenerate.

NATURE'S TEACHINGS

If we would not—like sickly mistletoe—
Become degraded, but would stronger grow,
With others' thoughts we must not be content,
Nor eat the food for which we naught have spent;
But rather like the noble tree produce
That which will to our fellows be of use.

THE WELL IN THE DESERT

Poor Hagar sat wringing her hands in despair
A bow-shot away from her son
Consumed by his thirst, and she knew not from where
Her help in the desert should come.

A well was beside her, concealed from her eyes
Bedimmed by her fast-falling tears;
The voice of an angel came out of the skies,
Assuring her, God always hears.

Her eyes then were opened, with gladness she drew
The liquid more precious than wine,
And gave to her son; he revived, and they knew
The well had been there all the time.

Like Hagar we roam in the desert below,
Our bottles of water soon spent;
A well is beside us,—if we did but know—
O'erflowing with sweetest content.

O drink, thirsty souls, from this cistern so pure,
And then to the dying convey
The water of life, which is able to cure
Earth's fever, and all thirst allay!

MORE JOY THAN SORROW

The year contains more sunny days
Than days of fog and gloom ;
The world has many more fair fields
Where fragrant flowers bloom,
Than barren deserts wide and drear
Unblessed by falling rain ;
And one may hear more songs of joy
Than cries of grief and pain.

There's more of sunshine in most lives
Than shadow ; more by far
Of blessings than of hurtful things,
Which sometimes come to mar
One's perfect happiness ; but why
Forget the happy days ?
Then let us laugh instead of cry,
Instead of murmur, praise.



SOME TIME WE WILL UNDERSTAND

Does the marble understand—
When beneath the sculptor's hand—
Why 'tis being cut away ?
No, but there will come a day
When complete in every part
It will stand a work of art ;
Then, perhaps, the stone may know
Why it had to suffer so.

NATURE'S TEACHINGS

Does the harvest understand,—
When 'tis cut, and threshed, and fanned,
And the grain is being ground,—
Why it suffers? No, but found
Finally in wholesome bread,
And to hungry people fed,
Then, perhaps, the grain may know
Why it had to suffer so.

Does the iron understand
Fully what for it is planned,
When it flows a liquid stream,
And is rolled into the beam?
No, but when, the river spanned,
It conveys from land to land
Human beings, it may know
Why it had to suffer so.

Can a person understand,
When beneath the Maker's hand,
He is being polished, why
He is sometimes made to cry
In his anguish? No, but he
Also shall know perfectly
When he stands before God's throne,
Knowing then as he is known.



NATURE'S TEACHINGS

"NONE OF US LIVETH TO HIMSELF"

The planets swing around the sun
In circles great or small;
In varying degrees each one
Of them attracting all.

The worlds revolving near the source
Of glory ever draw
The others to the light, by force
Of Nature's perfect law.

But those that move in outer night
Are pulling constantly
The other planets from the light,
Which teaches you and me,

That Jesus is the Christian's sun,
And so the nearer Him,
The greater will our strength become
To draw men out of sin.

But those who in the darkness grope
Must ever lead astray
Their fellows from the path of hope,
Which leads to endless day.

UNITY

Upon a flowering bush to-day,
The bees both large and small—
While gathering the sweets—would say
In their peculiar humdrum way
Not understood by all:

NATURE'S TEACHINGS

"This nectar is provided free
For bee and butterfly ;
The honey-bee and bumble-bee
Possess the same sweet liberty,
And none would we deny.

"We never drive away or sting
The bees of other kind,
But while we labor sweetly sing,
Then homeward fly on humming wing,
Our own affairs we mind."



REMINISCENCES OF CHILDHOOD

How swiftly will the thoughts at set of sun
Run back along the path that we have come
Upon our journey, till they linger where
In life's bright morning we were free from care ;
Back to the swimming pool, that place of joy
In sultry summer to the country boy ;
Back to the orchard, where we urchins knew
Just where the most delicious apples grew ;
Back to the river, where the fish we caught
Were better far than those we since have bought ;
Back to the place where wintergreen was found
Concealed by fallen leaves upon the ground ;
Back to the little school-house with its hum,
And rush for freedom when our tasks were done ;
Back to the peaceful spot we called our home,
Before we o'er the earth began to roam
In search of something, which we have not found.
Our feet in childhood stood on holy ground.

RIISING ABOVE ENVIRONMENT

In the very same bog
Were a lily and frog,
For they both had their home in the mire ;
But the latter content
With his environment,—
And possessing no higher desire,—
Simply wallowed in slime,
And himself would begrime
In the ooze both by day and by night,
Till his body was seen
To be warty and green,
And offensive in everyone's sight.

But the lily-plant's aim
Was to form from the same
Vile surroundings a blossom like snow,
With a fragrance so sweet,
That it might be thought meet
For the purest employment below,
And an exquisite form
That a saint might adorn,
So it struggled up into the light ;
The result we well know,
And we also may grow
Like the lily so fragrant and white.



TWO WORLDS

A minister was sitting in his chair,
 And drinking in the balmy, fragrant air
 That brought to him the welcome breath of spring
 And music of the birds, which always sing
 Their sweetest anthems when the spring has come.
 The frost had melted, and at last the sun
 Had loosed the earth from cruel Winter's hand.
 The minister was dreaming of that land
 Beyond the fleecy clouds that floated by
 Like little ships across the deep blue sky.

A villager was passing in the street;
 The mud had gathered thick about his feet.
 "'Tis fine o'er head!" called out the man of prayer.
 "It may be so, but I'm not walking there!"
 The villager replied in some disgust;
 "My way is always through the mud and dust."
 The minister forsook his easy chair
 And castles mid the clouds for highways, where
 The common people walk, to lend a hand;
 And that was preaching all could understand.

THE CATERPILLAR'S DREAM

A caterpillar—thinking death was nigh—
 Constructed for itself with wondrous skill
 A silken shroud, and then lay down to die.
 You might have thought it dead, it lay so still.
 What seemed like death was really but the way
 From lower life to higher, better things.
 The chrysalis was dreaming of a day
 When it would fly on golden colored wings
 Among the fragrant, honey-laden flowers.
 Its dream came true, but brighter dreams are ours.

MOUNT SHASTA

The natives thought—it seems not strange—
 Mount Shasta the Great Spirit's throne.
 Thou giant of Sierra's range
 In grandeur standing quite alone,
 In purple and in ermine dressed,
 And ruby tinted in the glow
 Of sunset, does the Spirit rest
 Upon thy pure eternal snow?
 "Yes; on the everlasting hills,
 And in the valleys, everywhere,
 His presence all creation fills,
 And wraps us like the limpid air."



THE PINE AND THE POISON-IVY

The sunshine from the ever verdant pines
 Distills a soothing balm, which on the winds
 Goes forth to heal and stay the hand of Death;
 But see those scarlet poison-ivy vines,
 Which twine about the trees in graceful lines,
 To scorch and blister with their noxious breath.

Some people like the pine and fragrant bay
 Are giving out their virtues day by day
 To comfort wounded hearts, and make them
 whole;
 While others—it is very sad to say—
 Instead of this, contaminate and slay
 With baleful words, which rankle in the soul.

THE BROKEN HARP

Like harp divine
This frame of mine
 Had many thousand strings;
But roughly struck by Father Time
Some cords have snapped. The harp, in fine,
 No longer sweetly sings.

Too roughly played,
Some strings are frayed
 And others quite unstrung;
And some that thrilled in days of yore,
Respond to Pleasure's touch no more.
 The harp is almost dumb.

No human hand
Can understand
 Or tune this wondrous thing.
Physicians patch us to be sure,
And try to help us to endure,
 That we may longer sing.

We hope once more
On brighter shore
 To join in melody;
For He who made us can restore,
And make us sing forevermore
 Through all eternity.



